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Migration and Global Justice Workshop Series

DAVID WATKINS

"The Right to Exclude Immigrants and its Limits"

Monday, January 26, 2015, 3:30PM - 5:00PM

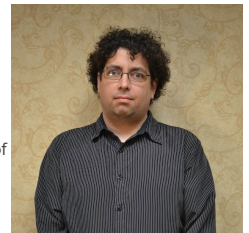
Mershon Center for International Security Studies
1501 Neil Ave. Columbus, OH 43201

[Register for this event here.](#)

[To read Watkins' journal article related to his talk, please click here.](#)

David Watkins is assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at University of Dayton, where he teaches courses in political theory, comparative politics, and the interdisciplinary social science program. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Washington in 2008, and previously taught in the Department of Political Science at Seattle University.

His research focuses on contemporary democratic theory, with three main strands: the construction of a distinctly neo-republican democratic theory, with non-domination as democracy's motivating and shaping commitment; the role and status of non-majoritarian veto points in democratic systems, with particular attention to judicial review; and the challenge that migration and the movement of people presents for democratic theory and practice. His writings have appeared or will appear in journals such as *Polity*, *Dialogue*, *Perspectives on Politics*, and *New Political Science*.



Abstract

This talk critically examines the normative foundations of the right to exclude prospective immigrants. On what grounds can such exclusion be justified? Watkins first argues that a new argument for the permissibility of such exclusions, the "associative ownership" (AO) account advanced by Ryan Pevnick in *Immigration and the Constraints of Justice: Between Open Borders and Absolute Sovereignty*, holds more promise than previous nationalist and freedom of association-based accounts. Advocates of AO note two clear exceptions to the right to exclude under this theory — refugees and the children of unauthorized migrants.

Drawing on recent work by Rogers Smith, Watkins argues that AO must admit to a third category of exception: Those who are currently outsiders but whose identities have been shaped and constituted by past coercive political and economic decisions of the political community in question also have a legitimate demand for inclusion. AO should recognize this sort of exception, and recognize that national identity may be an inadequate sorting mechanism to determine who merits such an exception. Watkins concludes with some reflections on the problems generated by methodological nationalism for the evaluation of demands for exceptions to the right to exclude would-be immigrants.

Theresa Delgadillo (The Ohio State University, Comparative Studies) will serve a discussant for this event.

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